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JUNE 2018 ISSUE 254

SUMMER OF PRIDE

We preview this month's local Pride festivals!

KATY PERRY

BRINGS HER WITNESS TOUR TO MIDLANDS

PLUS!

MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

+

COMPETITIONS
WHAT'S ON
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BALLET IN BRUM

BRB take to the streets with their hot male dancer Brandon Lawrence!

BIRMINGHAM pride 2018

INSIDE! Your 16-page Birmingham Pride picture special!

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OUT NOW

What's inside:

Pride in pictures 36
Were you snapped at Birmingham Pride? Check out our 16-page picture feature from 'Brum's event of the year.'

Ballet On The Streets 11
BRB's Brandon Lawrence pirouettes around Brum's iconic landmarks

Poppers, Pussy & Poetry 20
Ivo Dimchev talks about bringing P-Project to next month's BE Festival

ALSO INSIDE:

Have Ya Heard? 5
Local Life Story 8
Summer Of Pride 20
What's On Scene 27
Arts & Culture 34
Pride In Pictures 36
Out On The Scene 53
Competitions 57
Munch 59
Men's Health Week 61
Stephen Spinks Column 63
Cat's Corner 64
Steve Ball Column 65
Viral 66

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Have ya heard?

Shropshire town's first openly gay mayor is sworn in

The Shropshire town of Oswestry has its first ever openly gay mayor.
Councillor Sandy Best was sworn in as the mayor in a ceremony at the town's Guildhall, in the presence of her partner, Marilyn Taylor.
The Shropshire Star reports that 'the historian said it was a huge personal honour to be elected as mayor, an office dating back to 1674, and added that she was proud to be the first openly gay mayor in Oswestry'.
Speaking to the newspaper, Sandy said: "A mayor always needs a strong and reliable supporting act as a mayoress or consort, and it's my immense pleasure to confirm that my partner, Marilyn Taylor, will fulfil that role.
Together we greatly look forward to representing the council out and about in our community and beyond."

Biggest ever Carnival Parade for Birmingham Pride's 21st Anniversary

The organisers of last month's 21st anniversary Birmingham Pride presented the biggest ever Carnival Parade with over 130 entries and over 5,000 participants. More than 75,000 spectators turned out to support the parade through the city centre, with tens of thousands of party revellers enjoying the festival in the city's gay village throughout the two days.
This year's festival featured its most diverse line-up of more than 100 performers and DJs. Headliners included Scissor Sisters frontman Jake Shears, Rudimental, Nadine Coyle, Gossip's Beth Ditto and MNEK.
Lawrence Barton, Birmingham Pride Festival Director, commented: "This year's 21st Anniversary Carnival Parade has undoubtedly been the most successful in our history. We were amazed by the tens of thousands of spectators who turned out to support our Be You themed parade, in addition to all the visitors to the two-day Pride festival that followed.
"We are indebted to both West Midlands Police and the security teams deployed, who collectively ensured it was such a safe and happy Pride for everyone to enjoy.
"Everybody who got involved worked tirelessly to ensure that the festival went without a hitch. We're all immensely proud of everyone who took part."
Birmingham Pride next year is being held on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 May 2019.

Virgin Trains unveils #RideWithPride train

Birmingham Pride weekend saw Virgin Trains unveil a train at the city's New Street Station which features a prominent rainbow design and the #RideWithPride slogan.
Virgin says the train highlights their "passion for celebrating diversity and ensuring people can be themselves". The train will travel up and down the UK over the summer and ferry customers to Pride events along the West Coast route.

Wilde tales and gruesome ghosts visiting Coventry this Christmas

Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre will this Christmas present two festive shows based on the works of gay playwright Oscar Wilde.
Wilde Creatures (Wed 28 Nov - Sun 30 Dec) is an adaptation of the writer's classic fairy-tales, and features 'original live music, imaginative storytelling and a generous dash of comedy'.
The Canterville Ghost, meanwhile, is 'a gruesome ghost story for brave souls aged 12-plus'. The show runs from Tuesday 18 to Sunday 23 December and then from Thursday the 27th to Sunday the 30th.
Both shows are presented by Olivier-nominated theatre company Tall Stories, whose previous productions include The Gruffalo and Room On The Broom. For more information and to purchase tickets for the shows, visit warwickartscentre.co.uk

International dance festival takes to the streets of Brum

The hugely popular Birmingham International Dance Festival (BIDF) makes a welcome return to the city this month - 1 to 24 June.
Produced by the Birmingham Hippodrome-based DanceXchange, the event will feature 'fantastic dance in the city's theatres and a takeover of Birmingham's streets and squares, with show-stopping free performances and opportunities to get dancing'.
The programme, inspired and curated around themes of imagination and digital art, will present work that shows choreographic practice at its best, pushing the boundaries of dance as a contemporary art form.
Alongside the performance programme will be a series of professional and industry events, debates and workshops - creating a valuable space for dialogue, collaboration, the sharing of ideas and the development of skills...
To find out more, visit bidf.co.uk

Birmingham gay orchestra celebrates 10th anniversary

Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra (BGSO) is this month celebrating its 10th anniversary by performing a special concert at the newly opened Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.
One of the UK's most vibrant non-professional orchestras, BGSO will be playing a wide selection of music, from John Williams' score for Jurassic Park to Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake. The concert takes place on Saturday 16 June.

Have ya heard?

Primark Pride range made in anti-gay countries

Primark's new range of Pride clothing and accessories is being made in countries where gay people are subjected to violence and persecution.

The popular high street chain announced that the Pride-themed clothing would go on sale across the UK, Europe and America to celebrate Pride events, with campaigning charity Stonewall receiving 20 percent of the proceeds.

However, Primark has confirmed that the clothes are being made in countries where it's illegal to be gay.

A spokesperson for Primark admitted that the products are manufactured in China, Turkey and Myanmar, but "in accordance with internationally recognised standards".

Gay people in Turkey are routinely subjected to violence and persecution, while homosexuality is illegal in Myanmar, with punishments ranging from 10 years to life in prison.

Bohemian Rhapsody: First official trailer for new Queen movie is released

The official trailer for long-awaited Freddie Mercury biopic Bohemian Rhapsody has been released.

Rami Malek, star of TV show Mr Robot, plays the Queen frontman in the movie, which is due to hit screens later this year.

The official synopsis reads: "Bohemian Rhapsody is a foot-stomping celebration of Queen, their music and their extraordinary lead singer, Freddie Mercury, who defied stereotypes and shattered convention to become one of the most beloved entertainers on the planet."

Dance Hub Birmingham announces funding

Dance Hub Birmingham has announced that it will provide funding for a number of local dance practitioners and companies, in order to further establish the region's position as an international centre of excellence for dance.

Commenting on the announcement, the organisation's director, Monique Deletant, said: "Dance Hub Birmingham is bringing additional investment to the dance sector in the West Midlands, ensuring independent artists have professional development opportunities and enabling more new dance to be created here. In doing so, we continue to establish the region's position as an international centre of excellence for dance."

Local Life Story

Name: Beki Kilby

Occupation: L Fest Crew

Place of birth: Marston Green, Birmingham

Star sign: Pisces

Age: 36

About Beki

Where did you grow up?

Yardley, Birmingham, until I was about 10, and then we moved to a pub in Tamworth.

Single or attached?

Attached.

What makes you happy?

Apart from the obvious - like family and friends - food, listening to music, deep conversations, the ocean, nice soap and silly jokes!

What makes you sad?

Seeing people go through hard times. People not respecting and valuing the planet we live on.

What makes you angry?

I'm not a fan of negative, critical people. People should feel free to express who they are without getting judged, and we should also lift and encourage people when we can.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

To have a better memory, as most people who know me would agree that I never remember anything.

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

I have so many stupid moments that I don't get embarrassed anymore, but I remember having a first kiss with a boy at school and my brace came out in his mouth! I was brace-face for a good while after that!

Would you consider getting married in the future?

Yes, I've been planning it since I was six! My fiancée Cindy proposed last Christmas, so we're hoping for a 2019 wedding.

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

I fell in love with the girl at the rock show! Literally! But I also remember, aged about seven, doing Kylie & Jason roleplay with my best friend and getting to kiss her, as I was always Jason!

When did you come out?

I was 19. I'd met said girl at the rock show and didn't think anything of telling people immediately. I thought they would understand, but they didn't. I then gradually came out to different people over the years. Even now, I never tell people immediately unless they ask about my partner.

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

Speaking to my best friend from school at 19, she told me she knew in school, but I had no clue. I said, 'Well why didn't you tell me?' She said, ' I thought you knew and didn't want to tell us.' Thinking back, I was always very protective of my girl mates.

Who was the first person you told you were gay?

I called my sister the morning after I'd spent the night with 'rock girl'. She told me it was disgusting and put the phone down, which was then followed by a call from my mom to find out exactly what I'd been up to. It didn't go down well, but they've accepted it now and are fully supportive. I was still glad I came out to them, even with a bad reaction - it helps you to grow and learn.

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

I would hug them, tell them they are

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Anthony Hopkins.

What's your favourite book?

The Wire In The Blood, by Val McDermid, and my newest read, The Subtle Art Of Not Giving A F*ck', by Mark Manson.

Half empty or half full?

Half full with a dash of caution.

What's your favourite food?

Spag Bol.

And how about your favourite drink?

A good white wine or a cup of tea.

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

Madonna.

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

My Nanny Jean in heaven.

who they are and that it will all be okay. I would suggest they talk to someone they trust, or seek an LBGTQI group that can help. L Fest has been a great support network to hundreds of women across the UK.

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

I have. I had lots of boyfriends when I was younger. The best part about this was my son, William. He's my whole world.

L Fest

What was the motivation for crewing at L Fest?

I started dating 'the boss'! I was opened up to a completely new world. I had no idea it even existed and it wasn't really my cup of tea, or so I thought. Once you see it and meet the people, you never want to leave. It's truly amazing. Even William, my son, helps. He's very pleased with his 'junior boss' t-shirt. A place where women and their families can relax and be themselves is always a good thing and a massive asset to our community, and that's thanks to Cindy and the team. They're all amazing.

The event is taking place in Wales this year. How has the move been received?

So far, amazingly. The feedback has been so positive! It's a beautiful little town. I think it's a great venue choice for this year.

What's in store at L Fest 2018?

There's so much in store - there always is. Live music, arts, comedy, cool little hang-out areas, a dog show and the amazing kids' clubs. Lots of smiles, laughs and love. The volunteer crew members go above and beyond to ensure everyone is having a great time.

What's the biggest challenge you face in organising L Fest?

The weather! It's so unpredictable. I'm positive we will have the sunshine this year!

How rewarding do you find contributing to L Fest?

Very! You meet amazing people who become not only friends but family. I love seeing how L Fest makes everyone so happy and changes lives!

Where would you like to see L Fest in five years' time?

Still changing people's lives for the better.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene?

For about 17 years now. The first place I went to was DV8.

What's been your fondest memory of the scene?

I used to work behind the bar at Route, around 2002/3, and I have so many funny memories of great nights in there!

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the scene?

I do like Lequeefa from The Fox.

Who's your favourite person on the scene?

I love Andy from The Fox. I totally respect the fact that he's managed to cope with so many lesbians under one roof for so many years! The Fox is such an important place for many of us.

What do you most enjoy about the scene?

I think we have a good selection of bars, all in one area. There's always somebody new to meet, but I love bumping into old faces.

What have you noticed about the way the scene's changed over the years?

The community seemed a lot smaller back in the day. Everyone knew each other and had certain pubs they'd go in, and in a certain order. Now we get so many more groups of straight people than I ever noticed before. I also like the cultural diversity of the scene now.

How would you change the scene?

I would re-open Route! I loved that bar.

Beki Kilby with partner and L Fest Boss, Cindy Edwards

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

Somewhere good to eat, then somewhere I can dance off the pudding! I love live music, and if I'm in Brum, I still like to pop into The Fox, Missing and The Village every now and then.

What do you do to relax?

I love spa days!

What do you enjoy on telly?

I rarely have time to watch TV, but if I do, I love crime dramas and Blue Planet! Oh, and The Apprentice!

What was the last track or album you bought or downloaded?

Nirvana Unplugged In New York, on vinyl.

Which one website do you spend the most time on?

Asos - looking for clothes when I should be working!

What type of holiday do you prefer?

I love a good beach and book, but my favourite is sightseeing. I love learning about and embracing different cultures. I recently went to St Lucia and went up into the rain forests and around the cocoa plantation, which I really enjoyed.

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Ballet in Brum

Birmingham Royal Ballet's Brandon Lawrence takes to the streets of the city ahead of the company's latest piece, Polarity & Proximity a work being performed at Birmingham Hippodrome this month...

About Brandon

Polarity & Proximity dancer Brandon Lawrence answers a few questions about what he gets up to in his spare time...

Age: 26
Born: Bradford, West Yorkshire
Height: 6ft 2in

Hobbies? Eating out, cooking and watching films old and new.

Favourite place to eat in Brum? Many places, but a personal favourite is this little Chinese independent close to the theatre. The quality and portions call out to me.

Favourite thing to do in Brum? Seeing what's on at the many arts venues Birmingham has to offer.

Favourite place to while away a summer Sunday afternoon? I love a good picnic and enjoy the great canal walks.

If you weren't a ballet dancer, what would you be? I'd like to work in radio or TV, commentating or presenting.

Musicals or music? Overall? Music.

Classical or pop? My music taste is so eclectic, but overall, pop.

Night in vs night out? Night in.

Proudest moment? 2017! Dancing for and dining with HRH Prince Charles, performing with my wonderful company at the Royal Opera House, London, and dancing out the year at the Royal Albert Hall with our world famous Nutcracker.

Style icon? I don't really have one. I tend to take inspiration from what I see around me, whether on TV, in magazines or even as worn by members of the general public.

About Polarity & Proximity

Birmingham Royal Ballet's mixed programme, Polarity & Proximity, includes In The Upper Room – one of American dance phenomenon Twyla Tharp's most iconic ballets – and Kin., created for the company by former Birmingham Royal Ballet dancer Alexander Whitley.

The line-up is completed by **Embrace**, a new ballet from choreographer George Williamson. The work has been commissioned as part of Ballet Now, a unique five-year programme run in conjunction with London theatre Sadler's Wells and a consortium of industry leaders. The initiative's aim is to develop choreographers, composers and designers in order for them to create new and innovative works for the world stage.

'Quick-witted and even quicker footed', **In The Upper Room** is an exhilarating, athletic ballet in which dancers in sneakers and striking red pointe shoes dominate the stage with 'energy, flair and finesse'. Alexander Whitley's **Kin.**, meanwhile, is an 'athletic, abstract piece' danced to a 'pulsing, hypnotic' score by Phil Kline, played live by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia. 'Kin' celebrates the raw kinetics of dance, the virtuosity of ballet technique and the potential of movement to bring us together in different ways.

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Photo by Drew Forsyth

Birmingham Royal Ballet's Polarity & Proximity shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Wednesday 20 until Saturday 23 June. Visit brb.org.uk for more information or to book tickets.

IVO DIMCHEV

dishes out the dosh for P-Project...

“At the end of the day, anyone who performs on stage works for money - we just don’t see the exchange”

Performance artist Ivo Dimchev's work is often described as provocative and 'off the wall'. In a rare visit to the UK, Ivo next month performs in Birmingham as part of the city's acclaimed BE Festival. Prior to that, he'll be showcasing his musical prowess in a solo production at Birmingham REP.

In P-Project - an interactive performance based on several words beginning with the letter P - Ivo uses cash incentives to entice audience members to become involved. Midlands Zone recently caught up with the Bulgarian artist to find out what audiences can expect from his shows...

How would you best describe your art form, Ivo?

Probably schizophrenic. I have very diverse interests and a big passion for theatre and acting. I guess it's very messed up, but I'm very happy that these things - my different interests - can collide and support each other. Of course, it really depends on the context and where I present my work. When I have concerts in the music venues, I don't pretend I'm a visual artist or a choreographer - I'm a singer-songwriter and I'm okay with that.

You sing, dance, draw, write and perform. Which of these came first?

Theatre was the first thing. I had a lot of trouble as a kid, which caused me to be bullied. I stepped into the professional theatre when I was 12 years old and channeled all my extravagance into that, which acted as a kind of relief. It was the first sense of freedom I'd experienced, and I was accepted for who I was. I was also singing all the time, but I didn't take it seriously

Who has inspired you the most as a performer?

When I was a kid, I was inspired a lot by Charlie Chaplin and Elvis. Later on in life - in my early teenage years - I liked Elton John. In Bulgaria he was the only gay artist I knew -and I needed someone to look up to.

Are you able to describe a typical Ivo Dimchev audience?

I'm very happy with the 'contemporary art audience' label. My shows have been described as provocative and difficult for some people, as they push boundaries. I know my audiences are built of elitists and my shows are not to everyone's taste Audiences are usually built up of artists, young students and kind of more intelligent people who know more about culture. They're generally comfortable watching something they don't really know and might not have an interest in. Now I'm singing songs, my audiences are expanding - I'm seeing children and groups of grannies at my concerts.

You have a very diverse vocal range. Have you received any formal vocal training?

When I was 20 years old I tried to study opera, but I was unhappy with it because of the restrictions you have when you try to sing. There was always a right and wrong way to do things, and I didn't like it. I got frustrated, so I quit those vocal lessons. I started to develop my voice by myself. It's always been a passion, but I've never looked at it professionally

You've described your work as being provocative. Is there anywhere you'd dare not tread?

Nothing is forbidden. The more unusual the subject or topic is, the more interesting it is to me. Themes alone are not interesting; it's the relations an artist creates between topics or elements that's interesting.
I'm not a fan of violence; I'm very respectful and audience-friendly, I think. When I deal with a very difficult topic, I ensure that people understand the context, and that it won't cause a sense of rejection or disgust. I'm very careful in my articulation if a subject is more forbidden, dangerous or weird. I have to be clear and precise because it's very easy to offend people and cause them to leave. I don't want to be that type of artist.

Tell us about P Project, which you'll be performing at BE Festival...

P Project is the first project I did with dramaturgical interaction with the audience. The whole project is made up from an idea based on elements of our failing. The show explores the taboos in our minds towards money. I offer money for people to collaborate with me on stage, whether it's to write or dance or do different performances, and I offer them part of my fee. The money is transferred on stage for the different tasks.
Sometimes people in the audience feel uncomfortable about it - they connect it to prostitution or something really bad. Sometimes they blame me for showing how greedy people are and what they'll do just to earn a bit of money. At the end of the day, anyone who performs on stage works for money - we just don't see the exchange.

What tasks do you set your audience?

They're invited to take to the stage to dance or perform whatever task I instruct them to do for money - £20, £30 or £40. These people aren't dancers and it's usually their first time on stage, so they're naturally very shy. Their dance isn't great, but they're so beautiful in their vulnerability and shyness. It's just what they are. There's also a fake sex scene, which is sure to be a failure. The couple meet each other for the first time on stage and they're just there to earn some money - £220, for example. Of course, as a sex scene it fails, but it's so funny and entertaining.

Are audiences generally prepared for what they see in your shows?

I think so, yes. I'm quite experienced as a performer and I will make them feel very comfortable. Nobody is forced to do anything, and there's nothing really horrifying or difficult.

How does the reaction of British audiences to your work vary to reactions in other European countries?

I've been invited to the UK twice in my life Because my shows' genres aren't very clear, it probably makes it feel uncomfortable for British audiences. I suppose there's some conservatism in Britain, and this is probably one of the reasons I perform very rarely in the UK. I think it's due to the UK's performing arts scene being very compartmentalised - this is dance, this is theatre, this is a concert. If you blur the lines, it's more difficult - maybe not for the audience but for the programmers of the institutions.

What's next on the horizon for you?

Right after my shows in Birmingham, I have concerts in Estonia, Portugal, the Netherlands and Vienna. I'll also be in Vienna for a month teaching whilst performing some concerts. I've also been invited to audition for The X Factor, so I'll be looking forward to that, too.

Ivo Dimchev performs his solo show, under the name of I-VO, at Birmingham REP on Saturday 30 June. He then returns to present P-Project (a co-presentation with Fierce) as part of BE Festival on Tuesday 3 July. For information visit befestival.org

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SUMMER

Your guide to this month's Midlands LGBT Pride festivals

'Be You' at this year's Coventry Pride festival!

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 June - University Square
coventrypride.org.uk

Theme: #BeYou

Getting bigger and better each year, Coventry Pride is taking the theme of '#BeYou'.

Kicking things off is a walking parade through the streets of the city. The parade is scheduled to depart from the Cathedral Ruins at approximately 11am and end at University Square, where the weekend's shenanigans will continue

Pride-goers can enjoy entertainment on three separate stages. The main one, the Phoenix Stage, hosts more than 25 acts across the weekend. Highlights include performances by X Factor star Lloyd Daniels and Bizarre Inc vocalist Angie Brown. If acoustic music is more your thing, then head to The Herbert, where you'll find the Three Spires Stage. Cabaret lovers, meanwhile, should check out the Lady Go-Diva Stage

There'll also be a range of community stalls, markets, a family funfair and a health & wellbeing zone to enjoy
In short, this is one time when being 'sent to Coventry' should prove to be an absolute joy!

Potty for Pride in the Potteries

Saturday 16 June - Hanley Park
stokeontrentpride.org.uk

Stoke-on-Trent is set to go potty for Pride this month, as the city's annual LGBTQ festival makes a welcome return.
The sure-to-be-fun event features a wide range of inclusive activities, a host of interesting people and plenty of cracking music to enjoy. Performers include BBC One All Together Now finalists The Sundaes, Bizarre Inc vocalist Angie Brown and Aussie singer Kelly Wilde. There's a great line-up of local talent to sample too - so why not grab yourself a Staffordshire oatcake or several and join in the fun!

OF PRIDE

Ludlow Pride returns for a second year

Saturday 23 June - Castle Square
ludlowfringe.co.uk

Returning for a second year as part of the town's fringe festival, Ludlow Pride is supporting a positive stance against discrimination and violence towards the LGBTQ community. A free one-day event, the festival is a celebration of community, sexual diversity and gender variance, along the way promoting self affirmation, dignity and equality.
Expect all manner of 'fun and exciting' events to enjoy

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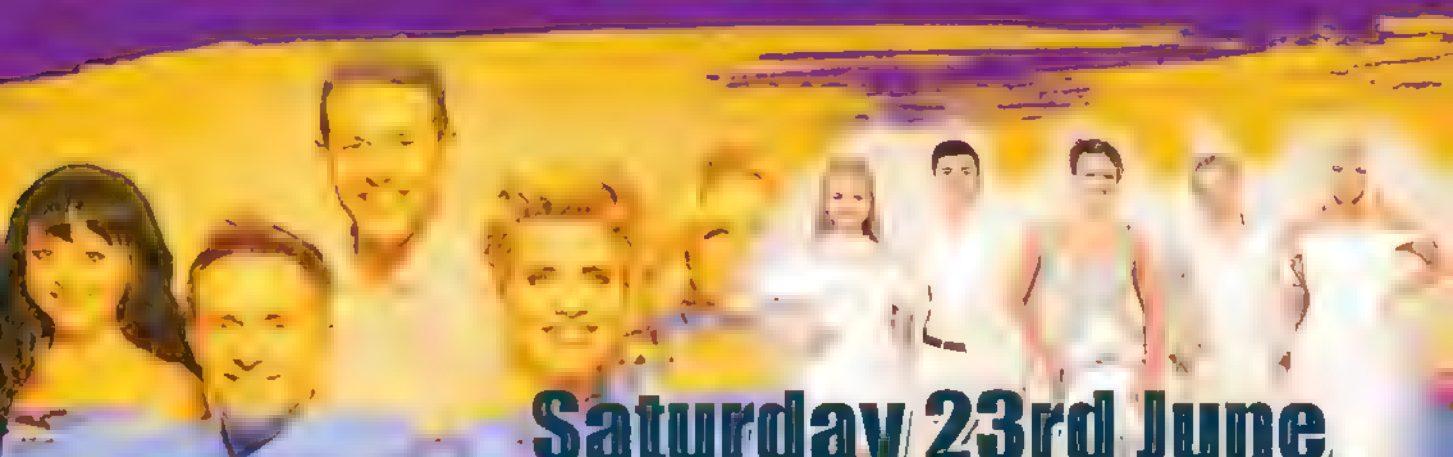


Saturday 23rd June

STEPS NIGHT

UK's Leading Steps Tribute Act Live On Stage

THE YARD. 11-12 BULL YARD. COVENTRY. CV1 1LH WWW.THEYARDCOVENTRY.CO.UK

SATURDAY

MISS MARTY

LA QUEEFA

TRIXIE DAVINA

DJS ON STAGE ALL DAY

SONIQUE

BABY D

COCO STAR

FRAGMA - TOCA'S MIRACLE

LIVIN JOY

KIERON RICHARDSON

PARRY GLASSPOOL

LIVE MUSIC BY THE UPSIDERS

SUNDAY

MISS MARTY

JACQUI CANN as ALISON MOYET

stars in Every Lover's Warfare

LIVE MUSIC FROM ESSENTIAL 80s

DJS ON STAGE ALL DAY

WORLD CLASS LASER SHOW FILLING THE SKY OF COVENTRY WITH COLOUR

SATURDAY 9TH AND SUNDAY 10TH JUNE

Got Pride?

Visit the sexual health team at Stoke-on-Trent Pride!

Free condoms and lube | Full STI testing | Sexual health information

www.lgbtstoke.co.uk

SUMMER OF PRIDE
UK Diary Dates

JUNE

Bristol Bear Fiesta and Southern HiBearnation
Saturday 2 June
Bristol Gay Village
bristolbears.co.uk

Oxford Pride
Saturday 2 June
Oxford Castle & Paradise Street
oxford pride.org.uk

[illegible]
Saturday 9 June
Winter Gardens
blackpoolpridefest.co.uk

Pride Canterbury
Saturday 9 June
Dane John Gardens
canterburypride.co.uk

Coventry Pride
Saturday 9 June
Fargo Village
coventrypride.org.uk

York Pride
Saturday 9 June
Knavesmire
yorkpride.org.uk

Swind[illegible]n & Wiltshire Pride
Saturday 10 June
Town Gardens, Swindon
swindonwiltshirepride.co.uk

Essex Pride
Saturday 16 June
Central Park, Chelmsford
essexpride.org

[illegible]
Saturday 16 June
Hanley Park
stokeontrentpride.org.uk

Portsmouth Pride
Saturday 23 June
Strawberry Banke
seacoastoutright.org/portsmouth pride-2017

JULY

Pride in London
Saturday 7 July
Trafalgar Square
prideinlondon.org

UK Black Pride
Sunday 8 July
Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens
ukblackpride.org.uk

Bourne Free Pride
Saturday 14 July
The Triangle, Bournemouth
bournefree.co.uk

Sparkle: The National Transgender Celebration
Friday 7 - Sunday 9 July
Sackville Gardens, Manchester
sparkle.org.uk

Pride Bristol
Saturday 14 July
Castle Park
pridebristol.co.uk

[illegible]
Friday 13 - Monday 16 July
Bodafon Farm, Llandudno
lfest.co.uk

Newcastle Pride
Saturday 21 July
Town Moor
northern pride.com

Pride in Hull
Saturday 21 July
Queens Gardens
prideinhull.co.uk

Brighton Trans Pride
Friday 20 - Sunday 22 July
Brunswick Square, Hove
transpridebrighton.tumblr.com

Chesterfield Pride
Sunday 22 July
Queens Park
facebook.com/Chesterfieldpride

Norwich Pride
Saturday 28 July
The Forum and Chapelfield Gardens
norwichpride.org.uk

Liverpool Pride
Saturday 28 July
Liverpool Pier Head
liverpoolpride.co.uk

[illegible]
Sunday 29 July
Preston Park
brighton pride.org

AUGUST

Bicon Convention
Thursday 2 - Sunday 5 August
Leeds Beckett University
2017.bicon.org.uk

Brighton Pride
Friday 3 - Sunday 5 August
Preston Park
brighton-pride.org

Leeds Pride
Sunday 5 August
Lower Briggate
leedspride.com

Chester Pride
Saturday 11 August
Castle Square
chesterpride.co.uk

Warwickshire Pride
Saturday 18 August
Pump Room Gardens
warwickshirepride.co.uk

Manchester Pride
Friday 24 - Sun 27 August
Manchester
manchesterpride.com

[illegible]
Saturday 25 August
Victoria Gardens, Truro
cornwallpride.org

[illegible]
Saturday 25 August
Gallery Square
facebook.com/walsallprideofficial

SEPTEMBER

Leicester Pride
Saturday 1 September
Victoria Park
leicesterpride.com

Gloucestershire Pride
Saturday 8 September
Gloucester Park
prideinglos.org.uk

Worcester Pride
Saturday 8 September
Worcester Common
worcesterpride.org/pride-2017

Cumbria Pride
Saturday 29 September
Carlisle City Centre
cumbriapride.org

Midlands Zone wishes you a safe and happy Summer of Pride!

MISS PENNY'S

FABULOUS MONDAYS!

DJ
CABARET
& HOST

THE BIGGEST GAY MONDAY NIGHT IN THE MIDLANDS!

PLUS

FREE ENTRY ALL NIGHT!

OPEN UNTIL 4AM!

GREAT £1 DRINKS ALL NIGHT!

PLUS

SPIRIT SHREWSBURY

HAVANA ★ REPUBLIC

[illegible] PRIDE HILL, SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE SY2 6AE TEL: 01743 271821

What's On

Fri 1 - Sun 10 June

Street Party to celebrate Coventry Pride!

There's a two-day party to enjoy at Coventry's The Yard this month, to celebrate not only the popular gay venue's first birthday but also Coventry Pride
And boy, is there a big line-up lined up!
As well as loads of cabaret, there are live PAs from the likes of Sonique, Baby D, Livin Joy, Kieron Richardson, Parry Glasspool and Jacquii Cann.
If you're looking for a fabulous weekend experience, then this is a great option!

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 June - The Yard, Coventry

Drag Idol national semi-final heads to Brum!

After rounds of auditions up and down the country, Drag Idol 2018 is soon to reach its conclusion, with a national semi final set to take place at Birmingham gay venue Eden Bar. The contest will feature celebrity judges Vicki Michelle, from 'Allo 'Allo, and Coronation Street's Wendi Peters. Host for the night is the ever-fabulous La Voix.

Saturday 2 June - Eden, Birmingham

It was acceptable in the '80s!

Yearning for a night of '80s hits to party along to? Then look no further than The Loft in Birmingham on the first Saturday of every month, where DJ Simon Baker will be spinning the tracks from years gone by!

Every first Saturday of the month - The Loft, Birmingham

Thunderpussy live at The Village Inn

Kickstart June with a Village Inn night of top cabaret in the company of the fabulous Miss Thunderpussy!
Expect all her usual shenanigans live on stage, with a good old fashioned sing song thrown in for good mea sure!

Friday 8 June - The Village Inn, Birmingham

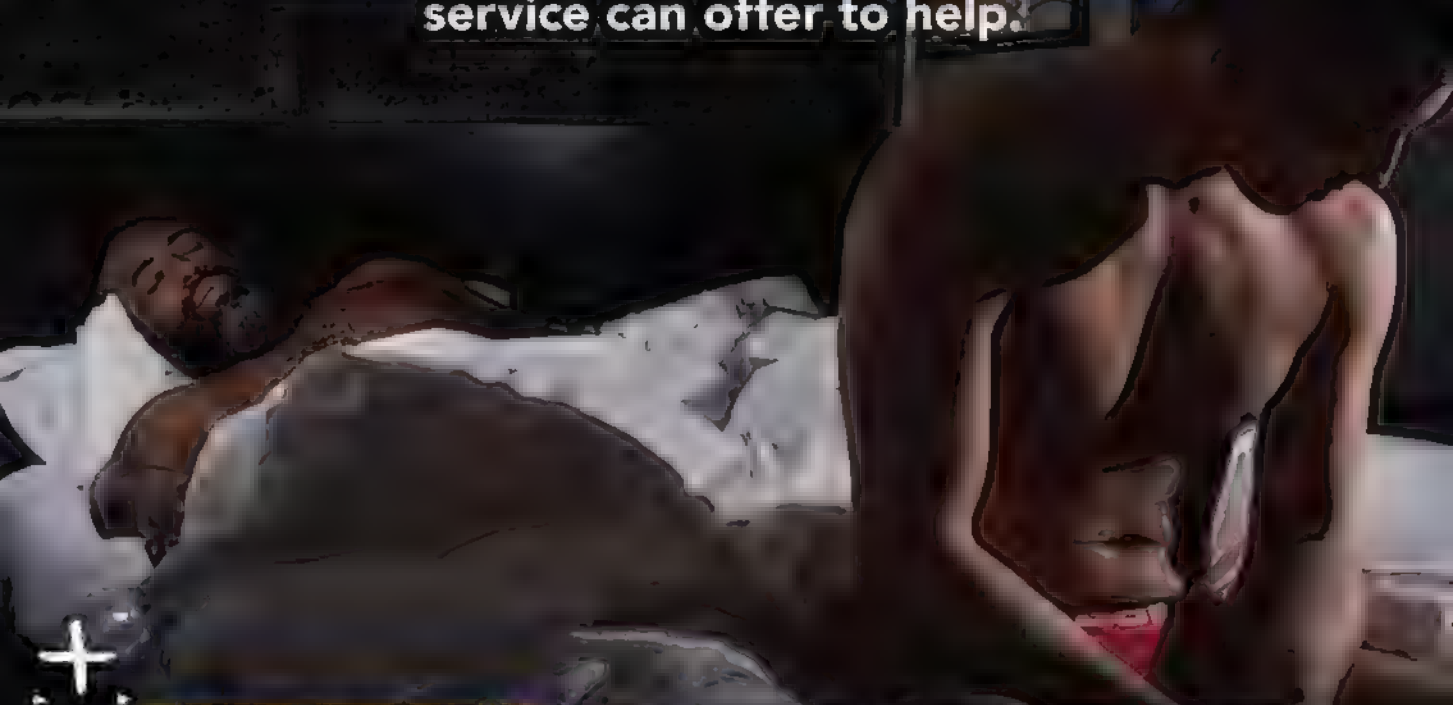
Sandra's back in town!

Hear me now! This month's guest cabaret act at Shrewsbury's Havana Republic is none other than Sandra London! Expect it to be a busy night out at the Shropshire venue, with great drinks offers and an electric atmosphere also on the cards!

Monday 4 June - Havana Republic, Shrewsbury

Partied hard?

If you're doing chems or looking for support around chemsex, our **CHEMFIDENTIAL** service can offer to help.



CHEMFIDENTIAL is a judgement free space offering support for you if you want to do things more safely, or make changes around the chemsex you're having.

Talk to one of our sexual health team for more information.

www.blgbt.org/sexual-health
Tel: 0121 643 0821

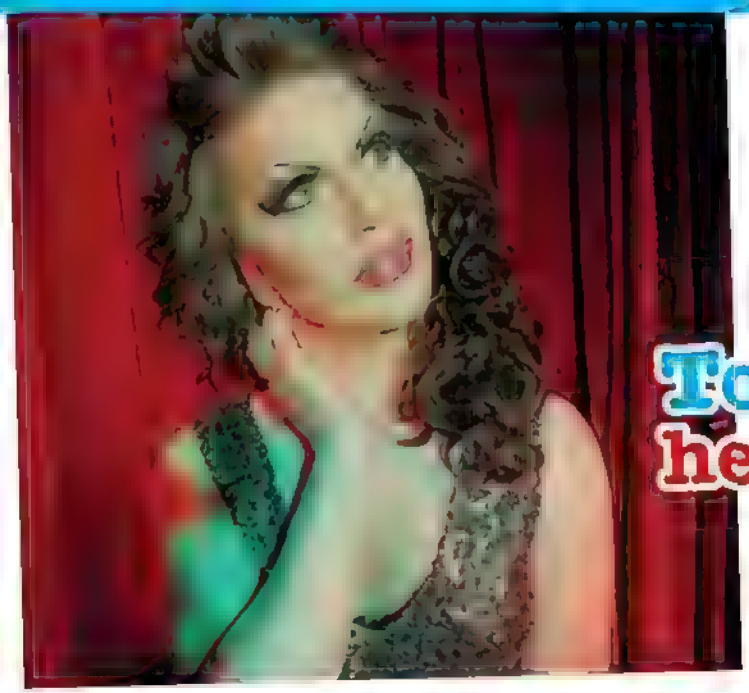
Birmingham LGBT

Supported by umbrella

Get tested from home for STIs including HIV.
Order your free kit now: umbrellahealth.co.uk/testing

What's On

Mon 11 - Sun 17 June



Let's get Quizzical with DJ Yogi

Wednesday nights at Birmingham's Eden Bar offer the chance to pit your wits against your mates in the Quizzical event. Hosted by DJ Yogi, the quiz involves using your smartphone to answer a few rounds of tricky questions. So if you fancy yourself as the next Egghead, then get along to the venue and try it out for yourself

Every Wednesday - Eden, Birmingham

Topsie Redfern heads to Brum!

Another week means another night of live cabaret at The Village Inn! This time out, the fabulous Topsie Redfern takes to the stage for an evening of naughty antics and a good ol' sing song! What better way to start the weekend than this?

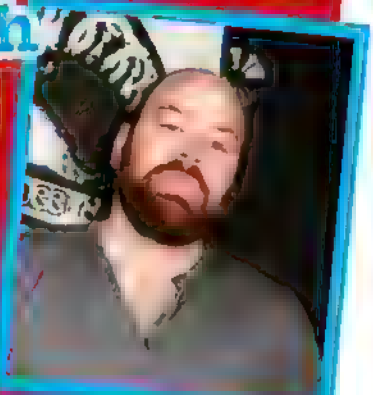
Friday 15 June - The Village Inn, Birmingham

Glitoris Girls party the night away in Coventry

Coventry's The Yard hosts fantastic live cabaret each and every week, with Friday the 15th seeing the Glitoris Girls taking to the stage.
Expect great entertainment and fabulous drinks offers all night long!

Friday 15 June - The Yard, Coventry

Head to the dance floor with DJ Poni!



Head down to Birmingham's Eden Bar on Saturday the 16th for a night of fantastic music courtesy of DJ Poni. A great atmosphere, fabulous company and a whole lot more awaits!

Saturday 16 June - Eden, Birmingham

More MidsBears fun at Brum's Eden Bar!

If you're a bear, or a friend of the bear community at large, then pop down to MidsBears at Eden every month. It's a great night out and attracts a fab crowd. Check it out you'll love it!

Friday 15 June - Eden, Birmingham

JUNE
CABARET
FRI 7
BAGA CHIPZ
FRI 14
MISS THUNDERPUSSY
FRI 21
TOPSIE REDFERN
FRI 28
SANDRA LONDON
FRI 22
MISS MARTY
THE VILLAGE BIRMINGHAM
WWW.VILLAGEBRUM.CO.UK

What's On

Mon 18 - Sun 24 June

If you're a fan of noughties pop icon Christina Aguilera, then get your booty down to Birmingham gay superclub the Nightingale for an evening dedicated to the Genie In A Bottle star! So 'Beautiful', we want to see 'Your Body' on the dancefloor with your 'Candyman' getting down and 'Dirrty'!

Saturday 23 June - The Nightingale, Birmingham

Morrissey magic

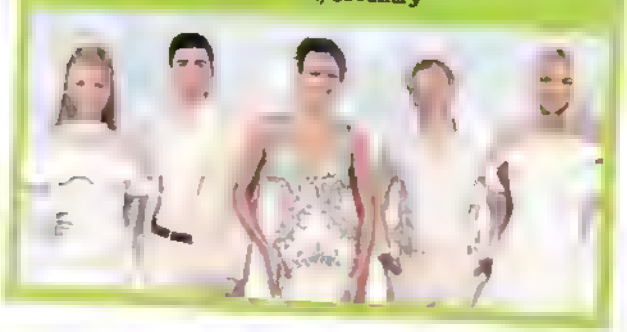
If you're a fan of all things Morrissey, then head to Birmingham's Eden Bar on the 25th.
It's there that you'll find a whole bunch of Morrissey fans enjoying a night out with likeminded people!
Get yourself along there - it'll be fun.

Saturday 23 June - Eden, Birmingham

Steps tribute night at Coventry gay bar

Coventry gay bar The Yard is this month presenting a performance by the UK's leading Steps tribute act.
So if you're looking for something a bit different from the norm, head on down - it'd be a Tragedy to miss it!

Saturday 23 June - The Yard, Coventry

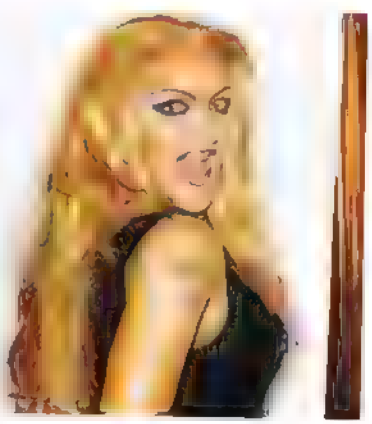


Marty's party

heads to The Village Inn in Birmingham!

Birmingham's Village Inn - the 2018 Midlands Zone Readers' Award's Best Live Music Venue - hosts fantastic live cabaret each and every week.
Friday the 22nd sees an evening of fun and frolics with the inimitable Marty Smith!

Friday 22 June - The Village Inn, Birmingham



KARAOKE & DISCO
EVERY FRIDAY & SUNDAY
WITH DJ NIKKI

QUIZZICAL!
The smartphone QUIZ
WEDNESDAYS 8PM
WITH DJ YOGI SpeedQuizzing

SAT 2nd
DRAG IDOL UK
& DJ PONI

National Semi-Final
WITH YOUR HOSTESS
LA VOIX
AND YOUR CELEBRITY JUDGES

from 'Allo 'Allo!
Vicki Michelle
&
from Coronation Street
Wendi Peters

SAT 9th DJ TONI LEE
FRI 15th MIDS BEARS
SAT 16th DJ PONI
SUN 17th LEATHER SOCIAL
THUR 21st DANNY BEARD
SAT 23rd DJ TONI LEE
SAT 23rd MORRISSEY DISCO

Open from 2pm Every Day | 116 Sherlock St. Birmingham, B5 6NB | End of Hurst Street | 0121 622 1953 | www.TheEdenBar.co.uk

What's On

Mon 25 - Sun 30 June

Coventry cabaret with Thunderpussy

There's yet another night of cabaret to enjoy at Coventry gay venue The Yard this week.
This time it's with the fantastic Miss Thunderpussy!
If you haven't visited the venue yet, what're you waiting for?

Friday 29 June - The Yard, Coventry

Party with Mike Emery!

If, like us, you love a midweek party, then you should head to Birmingham's Glamorous Bar for a great night out with award winning DJ Mike Emery. Mike will be playing only the best tunes all night long, and really getting you into the party spirit!

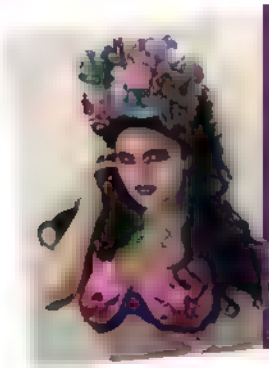
Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday Glamorous, Birmingham

Sing with Sandra at The Village Inn!

This week's Friday night cabaret at Birmingham's award winning Village Inn is provided by drag veteran Sandra London, who'll be presenting an evening of cracking comedy and singa-long magic. What's not to like?

Friday 29 June - The Village Inn, Birmingham

Get the party started at the Gale



If you're looking for a great night out, The Nightingale in Birmingham is one of the best places to head for - particularly as they're offering you free admission before midnight every Saturday! Not only that, there's an all-night-long £1 drinks list too, and music from a whole host of resident DJs! We'll be seeing you on the dancefloor!

Every Saturday - The Nightingale, Birmingham

Anyone for cocktails?

You've had a great weekend partying in Brum's gay village - and then along comes Monday to bring you crashing back down to earth with a great big bang. But fear not, there's still fun to be had! Every Monday, The Loft runs its hugely popular Cocktail Club, serving two cocktails for just a tenner from 5pm until late There's a massive menu to choose from too, meaning there's something for everyone to enjoy:

Every Monday - The Loft, Birmingham

Weekly Karaoke at The Yard

Up for a bit of a midweek sing song? Then be sure to head along to Coventry gay venue The Yard. There, you'll be joined by Minnie & Jupiter from 8pm onwards, catering for all your karaoke needs. There's even a free shot for every singer!

Every Thursday The Yard, Coventry

What's On

Arts Theatre Entertainment

Katy Perry

Despite a God fearin', homo hatin' Christian upbringing and an adolescence spent 'praying the gay away' at Jesus camp (praise the Lord!), Katy Perry has turned out to be an alright kinda gal.
One of the richest women currently rocking the planet, singer-songwriter Katy is a big advocate for LGBT rights. She also did some campaigning on behalf of Hillary Clinton, as Mrs C raced for the White House against that nasty ol' Donald Trump
The former Mrs Russell Brand visits the Midlands this month with her fourth tour, Witness

Monday 18 June, Arena Birmingham

The Happy Prince

Having portrayed Oscar Wilde on stage in David Hare's The Judas Kiss, Rupert Everett obviously got a taste for Wildean theatrics. Here, his own screenplay chronicles the last days of the Irish wit and playwright when he suffered terrible recrimination whilst in exile in Naples and Paris. The film also marks the directorial debut of Everett. **Released Friday 15 June**

Scott Capurro

Outrageous and outspoken, gay comedian Scott Capurro (pictured below) certainly knows how to provoke a response - as hefty numbers of complaints following various television appearances ably testify
Confident, catty, charismatic and Californian, Scott has no qualms about using material that might well offend a significant proportion of an unprepared audience. Several years back, for instance, he caused an Edinburgh Festival stir by making light of the Holocaust - a decision that saw around a quarter of those watching vote with their feet.
When he's not in boundary pushing mode and talking about subjects like Aids, his material includes such humorous observations as, "Scotland had oil, but it's running out thanks to all that deep frying". The gag was voted one of the top 10 at the Fringe a couple of years back.

Thursday 7 - Saturday 9 June, Glee Club, Birmingham

Revolving Door

The under-publicised issue of gay male suicide lies at the heart of this thought-provoking 40-minute play. Distressed by the state of the world, Martin kills himself. With his ghost taking the role of coroner at his own inquest, he calls as witnesses his mother, his doctor and various other health professionals, to try and establish with whom the responsibility for his suicide actually lies.
The show is followed by a discussion forum on the subject of suicide prevention.

Tuesday 26 & Wednesday 27 June, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

Supersonic Festival

A much-loved experimental music and arts event is making a return to Birmingham this month. Supersonic Festival was first held in the city in 2003 and brings together live performance with visual art, audience participation and kids' gigs.

Friday 22 - Sunday 24 June, Digbeth, Birmingham

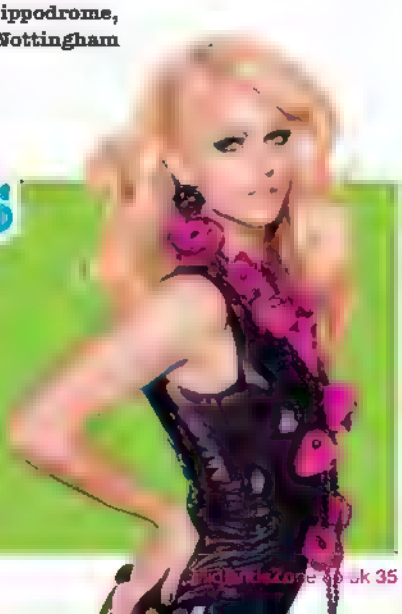
Creative Rage

Titanic: The Musical

One of the world's most famous musicals here recounts the story of one of the world's most famous disasters, as one of the world's most famous ships collides with unquestionably the world's most famous iceberg (not counting the so-named lettuce!).
Neither Kate Winslet nor Leonardo di Caprio are on board, but there are plenty of songs to enjoy before the RMS Titanic gets its one-way ticket to Davy Jones's Locker
Titanic The Musical first opened on Broadway in 1997 and won five Tony Awards. This new production visits the Midlands direct from London, and has enjoyed critical acclaim across the board.

Monday 4 - Saturday 9 June, Birmingham Hippodrome,
Monday 2 - Saturday 7 July, Theatre Royal Nottingham

Courtney Act: Under the Covers



Here at Zone we're all still recovering from two days of partying magic at Birming ham Pride - so much so that we've unexpectedly run out of steam down here at the bottom of the page. Luckily for us, though, we really like the official blurb for Courtney's O2 Institute gig - so rather than write some wise words of our own, we've decided to let you read the promotional material while we all take a quick nap under our desks. So here it is. Have fun... "Lay back and enjoy the caress of ro-mantic satin sheets as Courtney strips some songs down and flips others on their back to show you just how gender fluid and genre fluid a great song can be! The sweet dreams Courtney spins will leave you pillow fighting and pillow biting."

Friday 8 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

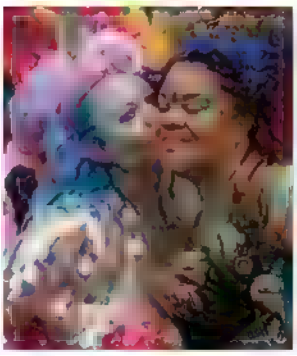
Carnival Parade
PRIDE
LET
IDE
DE YOUR GUIDE

BIRMINGHAM
pride
2018
Picture Special

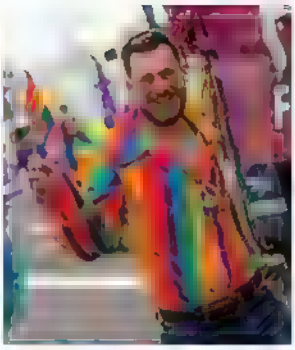
Carnival Parade
highways connecting the country with pride
BE yo

BIRMINGHAM Pride 2018

Picture Special

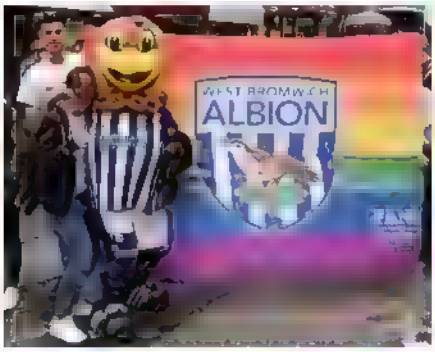


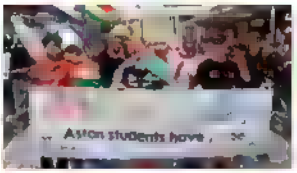
Carnival Parade
BARCLAYS



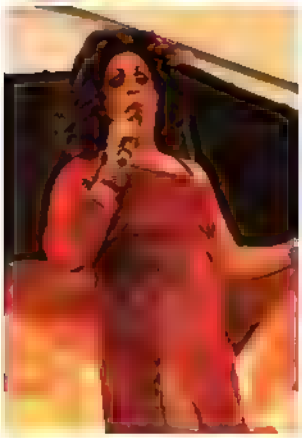
BIRMINGHAM pride 2018

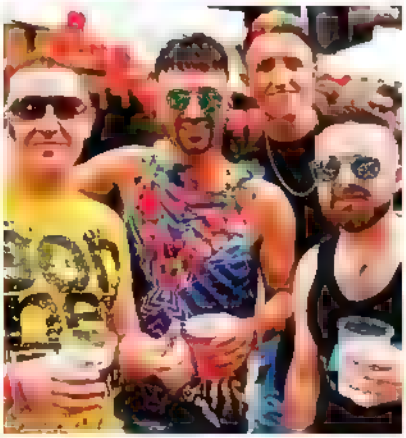
Picture Special

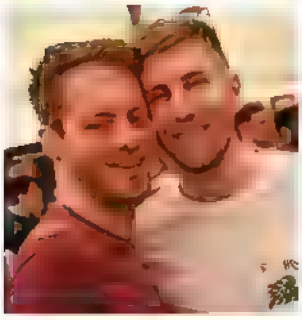


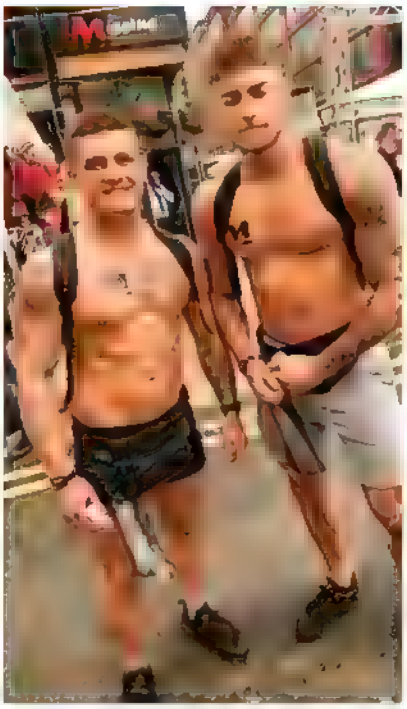


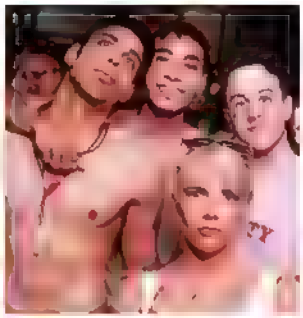
Around the Gay Village

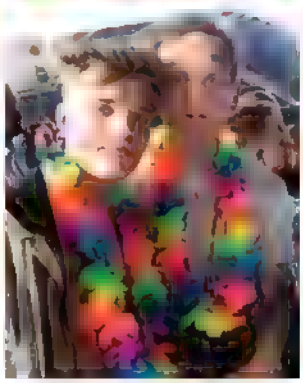


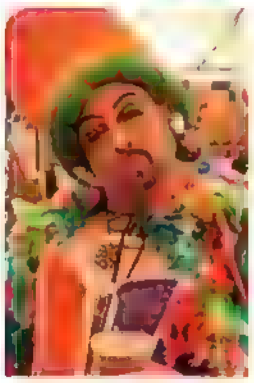


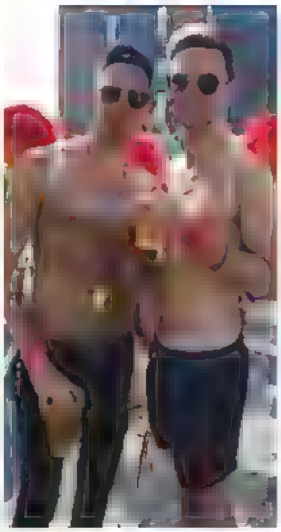






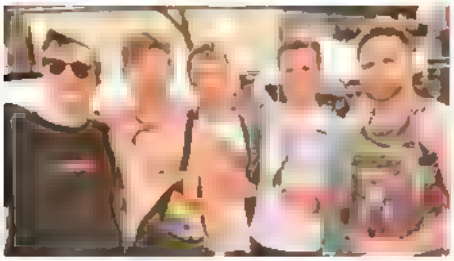


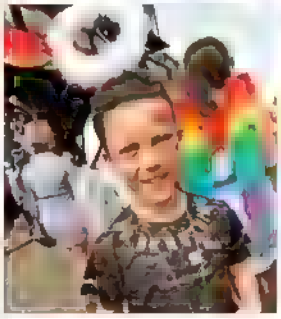


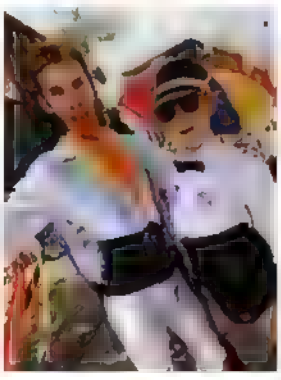


BIRMINGHAM pride 2018

Picture Special

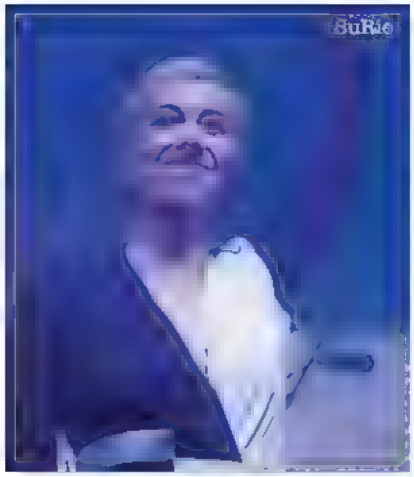


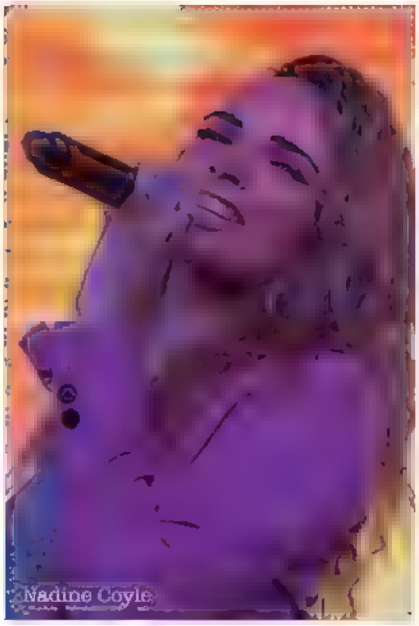


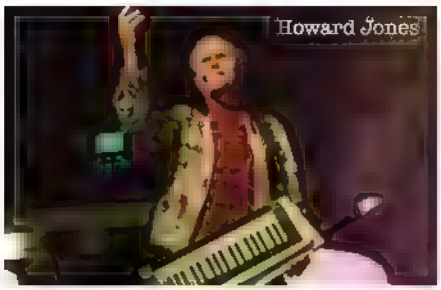


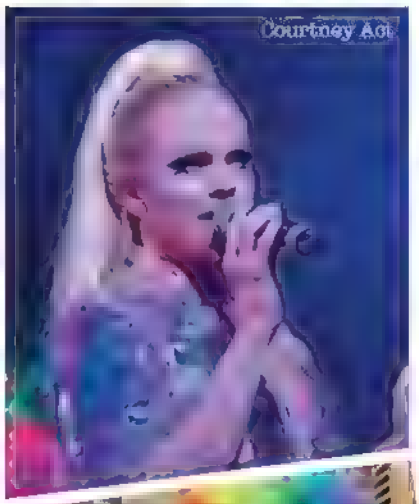
Pride Main Stage

Austin Armacost

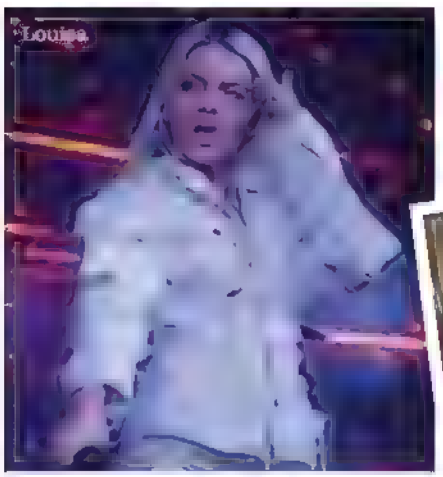

SuRie


Nadine Coyle


Howard Jones


Courtney Act

MNEK

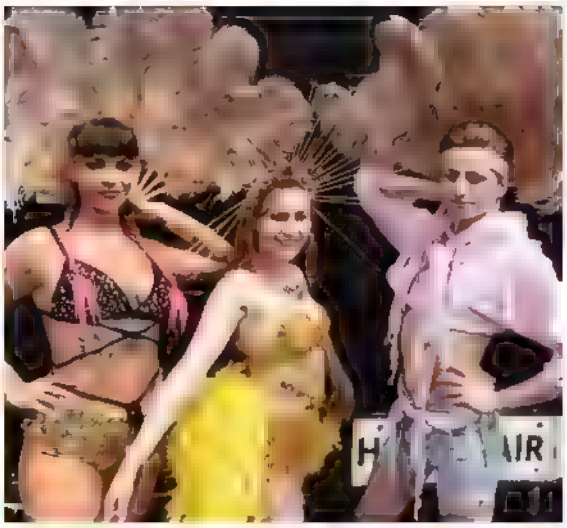

Louisa

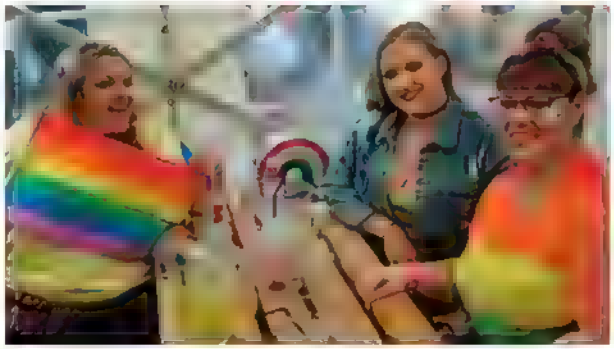
Sandra from Gogglebox tight

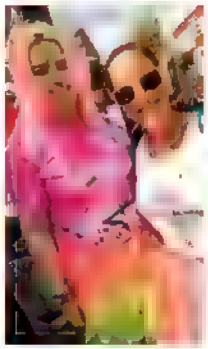
BIRMINGHAM pride 2018

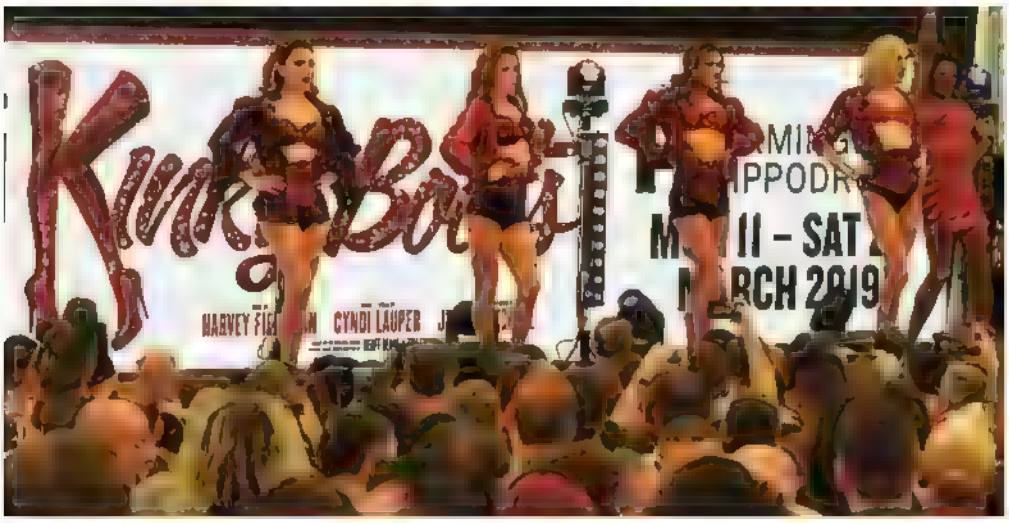
Picture Special

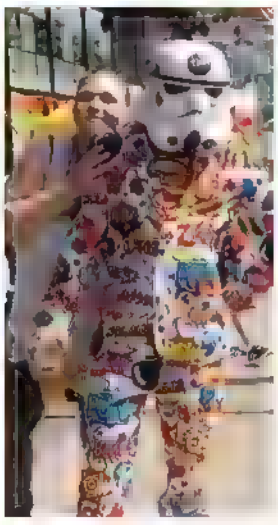
Around the Gay Village





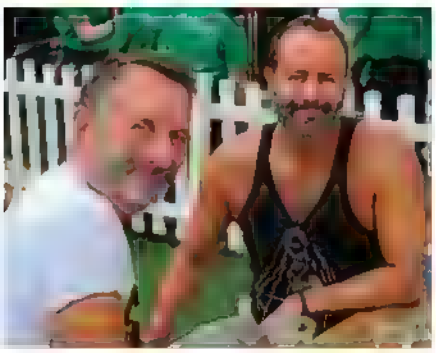


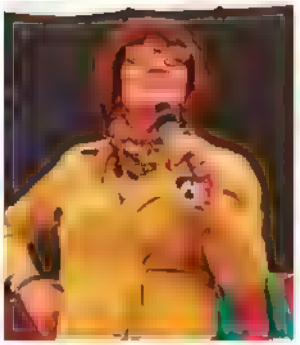


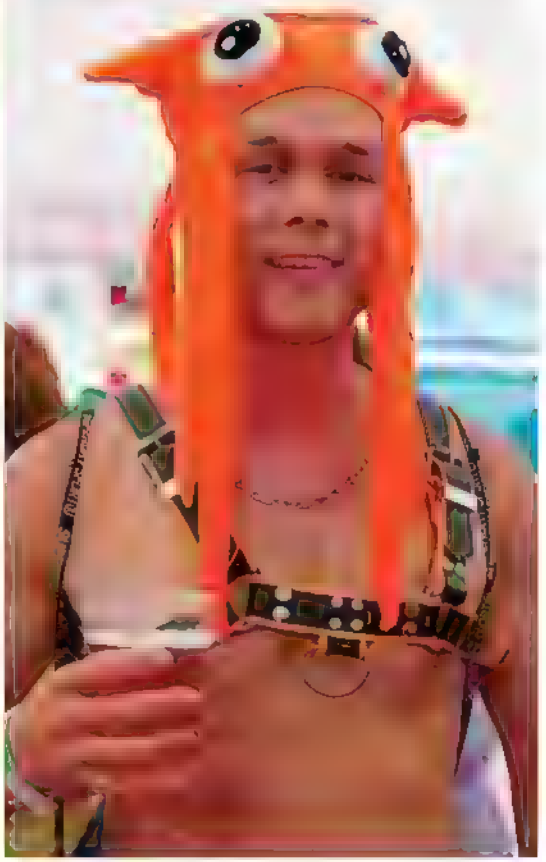


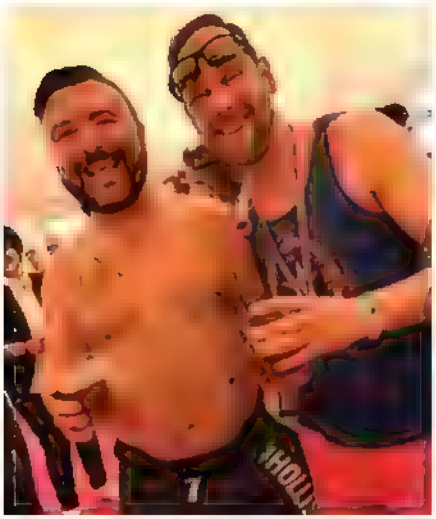
BIRMINGHAM pride 2018

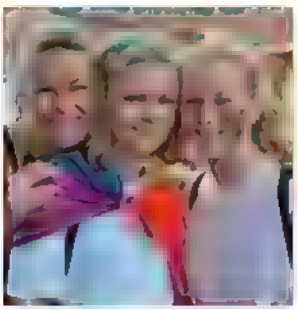
Picture Special



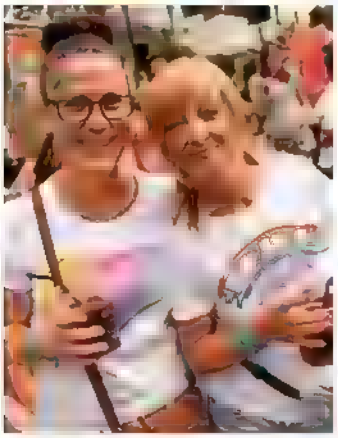
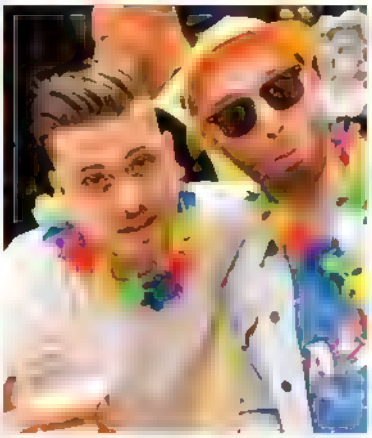


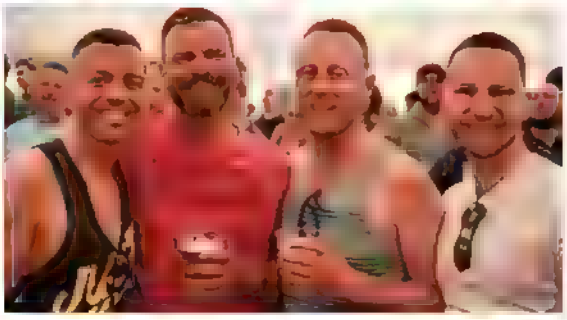
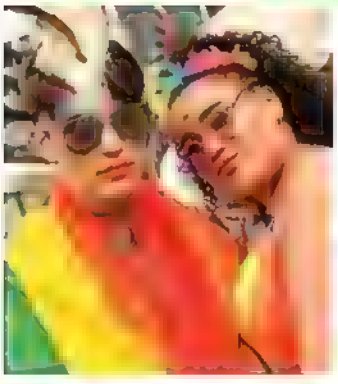


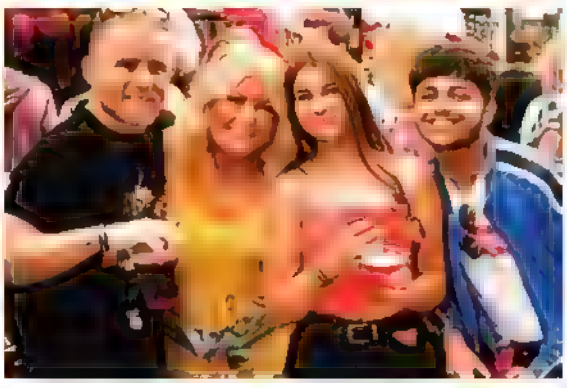
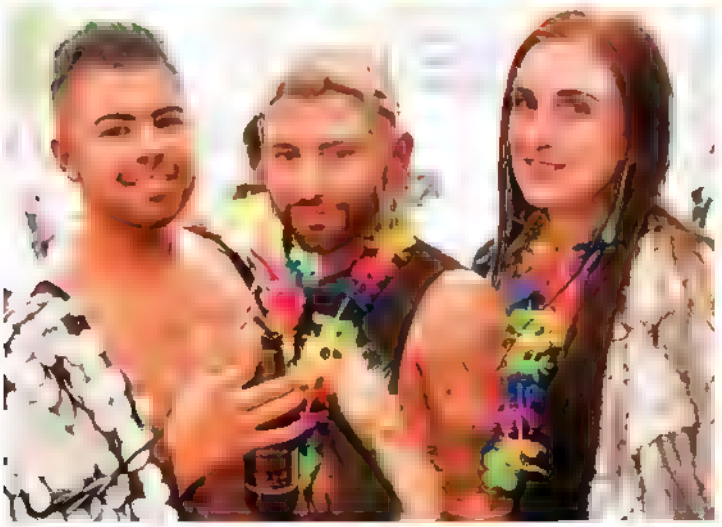


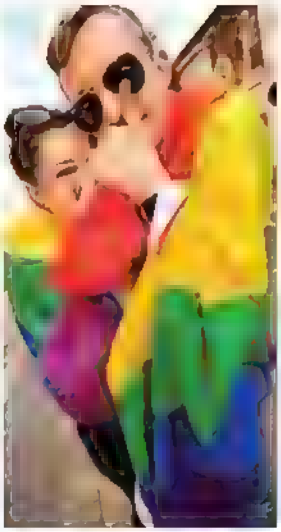


Around the Gay Village

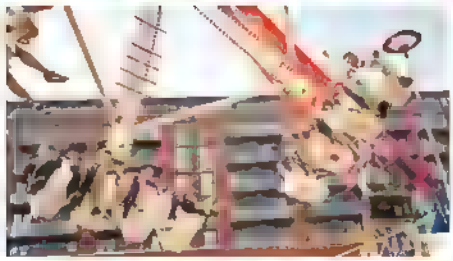



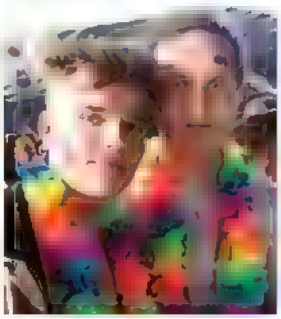





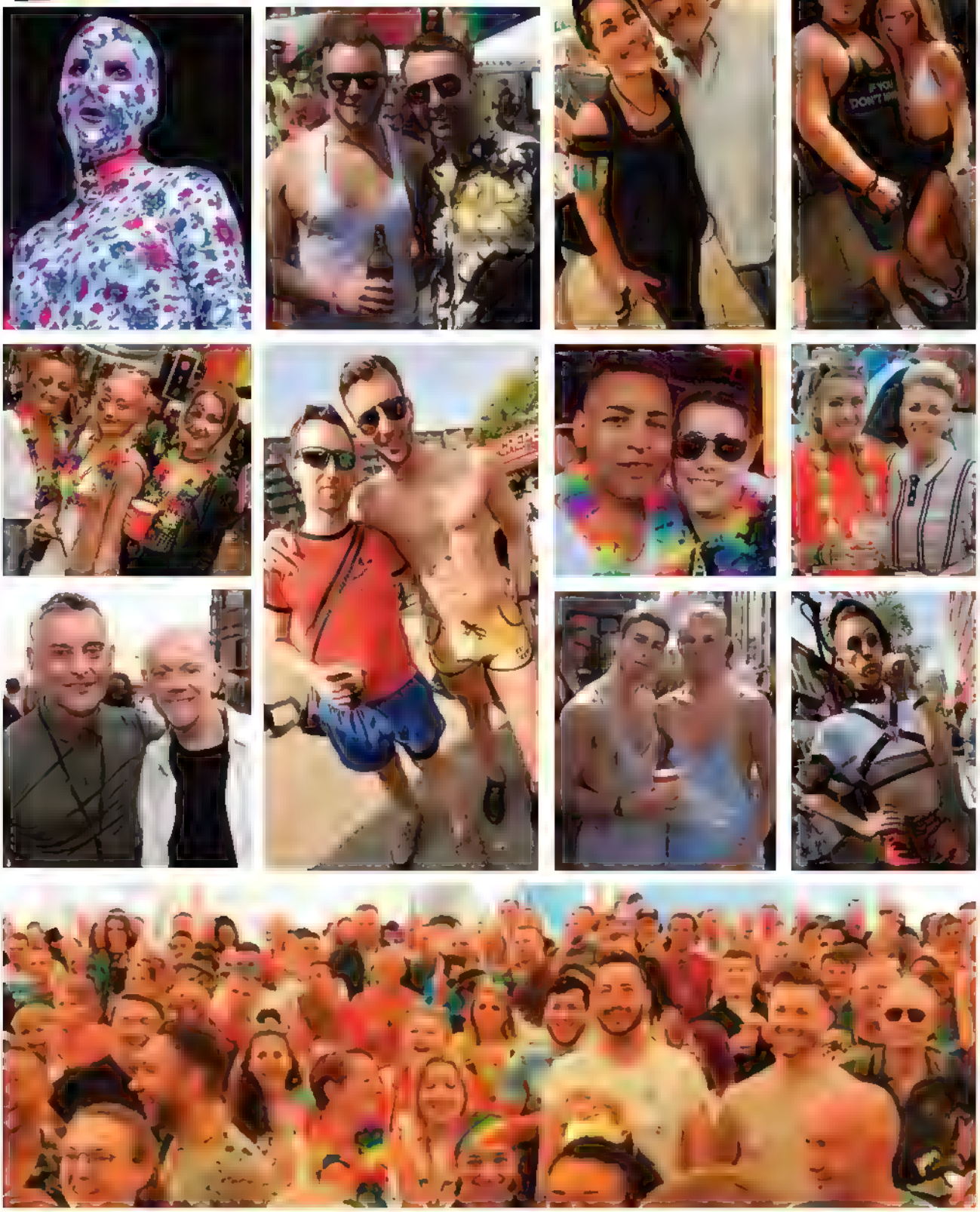
BIRMINGHAM pride 2018

Picture Special





Around the Gay Village



Pictures by **Laura Byrne, Antony Collins, Clive Padden, James Furnival, Jason Dawson, Kal Ahmed, Lei Woodhouse, Darren Hodson & Daniel Renyard**

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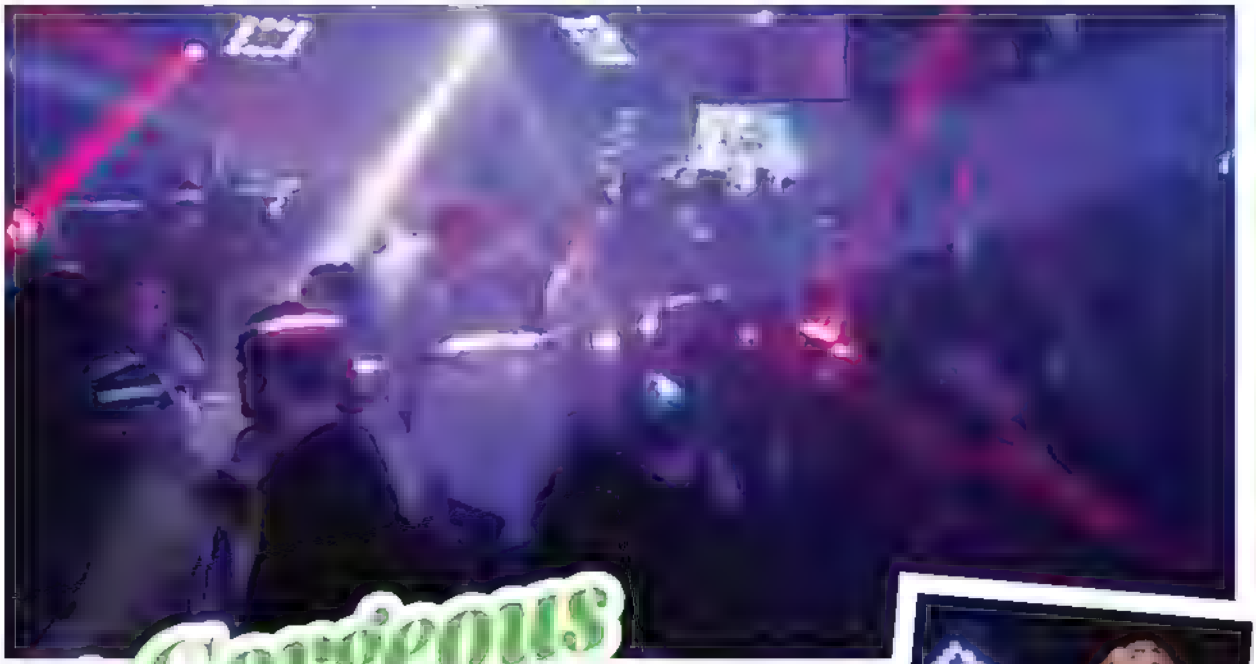
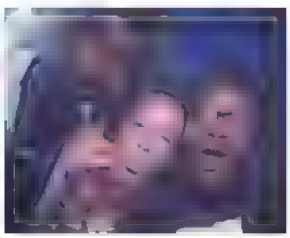
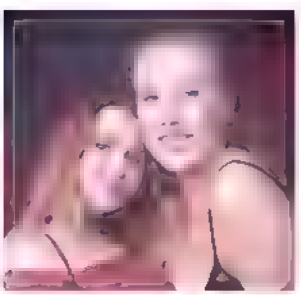


A Gorgeous night out in Wolverhampton

There's only one place to head to in Wolverhampton if you're looking for a big gay night out - and that's the award-winning Gorgeous bar and club!

For those looking for a great atmosphere, cracking drinks offers, fabulous customers and fantastic music, the venue offers a truly Gorgeous night out!





Pictures by **Laura Byrne**

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BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME

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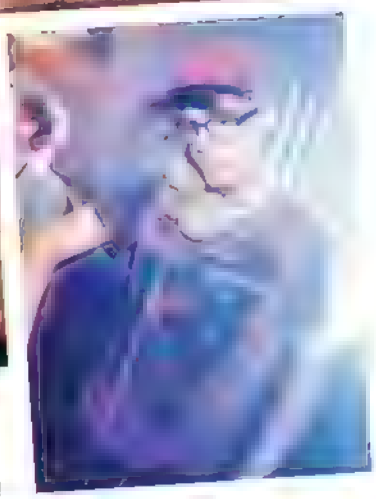
Image: Brandon Lawrence. © SOLA

Birmingham City Council

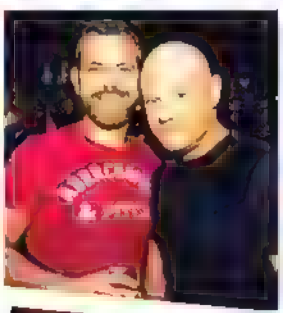
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

It's a great night out at The Yard



If you're looking to party in Coventry, head for LGBT venue The Yard and enjoy an evening of top-class revelry!

With weekly cabaret, special guests and this month, a massive street party as part of the Coventry Pride celebrations, you don't have to look any further for a good night out!



Pictures by The Yard

GAY BARS & CLUBS IN THE MIDLANDS...

BAR JESTER
[illegible] Centre, B1 1EC
Tel: 0121 643 8344

BOLTZ CLUB
Lower Essex St, B5 6QP
Tel: 0121 666 6888

CLUB CHIC
28 Horsefair, B1 1DD
Tel: 0121 666 6806

THE CORE
Sherlock St, B5 6NB
Tel: 0121 622 2797
www.thecoreclub.co.uk

DEVILS KITCHEN
Kent St, B5 6NB

EDEN BAR
Sherlock St, B5 6NB
Tel: 0121 622 1953
www.theedenbar.co.uk
/eden.bar

RHAPSODY BAR
Hurst St, B5 6SE
Tel: 0121 622 4046

FOUNTAIN INN
Wrentham St, B5 6QL
Tel: 0121 622 1452

THE FOX
17 Lower Essex St,
B5 6SN Tel: 0121 622 3213

GLAMOROUS
27 Hurst St, B5 4BD
www.glamorousbirmingham.co.uk
/Glamorousbirmingham

THE LOFT
142 Bromsgrove St,
B5 6RG
Tel: 0121 6222 444
www.theloftlounge.co.uk
/The-Loft-Lounge

MISSING BAR
Hurst St, B5 6NU
Tel: 0121 622 4256
www.missingbar.co.uk
/missingbar

THE NIGHTINGALE
Kent St, B5 6RD
Tel: 0121 622 1718
www.nightingaleclub.co.uk
/thenightingaleclub

SIDEWALK
Hurst Street, B5 6SE
Tel: 0121 666 6220
www.sidewalkbirmingham.co.uk

THE VILLAGE INN
Hurst St, B5 4BD
Tel: 0121 622 4742
www.villagebirmingham.co.uk
/villageinnbirmingham

THE WELLINGTON
72 Bristol St, B5 7AH
Tel: 0121 622 2592

West Midlands

COVENTRY

GLAMOROUS COVENTRY
88 Short St, CV1 2LX
www.glamorouscoventry.co.uk
/GlamorousCoventry

KIKI LOUNGE & LOFT
Earlsdon High St, CV5 6ET

THE YARD
11- [illegible]
www.theyardcoventry.co.uk
/TheYardCoventry

GLOUCESTER

THE WESTGATE
Westgate Street, GL1 2NF
Tel: 01452 690045

KIDDERMINSTER

ROYAL EXCHANGE
31 New Road, DY10 1AF
Tel: 01562 228619

SHREWSBURY

THE PEACH TREE
18-21 Abbey Foregate
Tel: 01743 355055
www.thepeachtree.co.uk
/ThePeachTreeRestaurant

HAVANA REPUBLIC
18-21 Abbey Foregate
SY2 6AE
Tel: 01743 271821
www.havanarepublic.co.uk/
/HavanaRepublic

LEEK

VALIANT
3 Stanley Street, ST13 5HG
Tel: 01538 382812

STOKE-ON-TRENT

GOSSIP
4 Hope Street, ST1 5BT
Tel: 01782 204957

PINK
93 Stafford Street, ST1 1LS
Tel: 01782 272772

STOURBRIDGE

THE BELL
20 Market St, DY8 1AG
Tel: 07826 518478

STRATFORD upon AVON

NO.7
Prowd Crowd 1st Mon
month, 7 Windsor St
Tel: 07787 642510

TELFORD

THREE FURNACES
30 Bridgnorth Rd, Madeley
TF7 4JB 01952 588521

WALSALL

THE LION
Birchills St, WS2 8NG
Tel: 01922 610977

THE RED LION
Park St, WS1 1NW
Tel: 01922 637790

WOLVERHAMPTON

BOND STREET TAVERN
14 Bond St, WV2 4AS
Tel: 07825 305050

GORGEOUS
School St, WV1 4LF
Tel: 01902 427247
/gorgeousbar

WORCESTER

THE FLAG
50 Lowesmoor, WR1 2SG
Tel: 01905 780467

VELVET CLUB
Angel Row, WR1 3QN
Tel: 01905 20218

East Midlands

DERBY

THE CROWN INN
40 Curzon St, DE1 1[illegible]
Tel: 01332 381742

LEICESTER

DOVER CASTLE
34 Dover St, LE1 6PT
Tel: 0116 255 3052

HELSINKI
94 Rutland St, LE1 1SB
Tel: 0116 254 7568

RAINBOW & DOVE
185 Charles St, LE1 1LA
Tel: 0116 254 7568

VENOM
(YOLO) Gay every Wed
Belgrave Gate, LE1 3GR
Tel: 0116 251 7986

NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON
College St, NN1 2QP
Tel: 01604 604404

NOTTINGHAM

NEW FORESTERS
St Ann's St, NG1 3LX
Tel: 0115 958 0432

THE NEWMARKET INN
38 Lower Parliament
Street, NG1 3BA. (Gay
Friendly)

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WIN! A pair of tickets to **Boogie Nights** at the Alex

A disco diva's delight, groovy musical Boogie Nights visits Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre in August - and you could be there to see it, courtesy of our fantastic competition!

Taking place on 16 August 1977, the day that Elvis Presley died, the show tells the story of Roddy O'Neil, his friends, their lives, loves and experiences of growing up in the disco decade.

The show is packed to its proverbial rafters with disco-tastic tunes, including You Sexy Thing, Y.M.C.A., I Will Survive, In The Navy, Can You Feel The Force, I Love To Love, Boogie Wonderland and many more.

Boogie Nights - The Musical shows at New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, from Wed 22 to Sat 25 August. Visit atgtickets.com to book your seat.

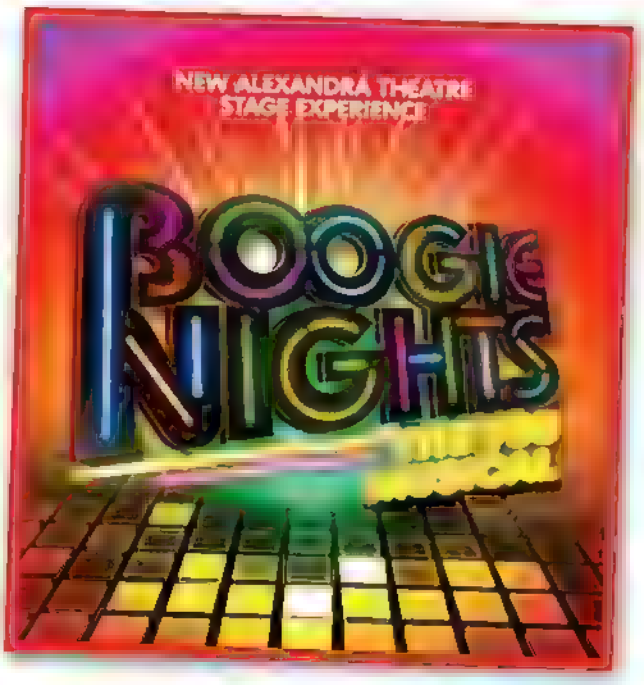
We have one pair of tickets to give away to this high-energy show

To enter our competition, just visit midlandszone.co.uk and answer the following question.

In which year did Gloria Gaynor have a hit with I Will Survive?

A) 1978
B) 1998
C) 2008

Competition closes on Monday 2 July. Enter online at midlandszone.co.uk



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6TH-7TH JULY 2018
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BIRMINGHAM
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Book & Lyrics by Bill Russell
Music by Henry Krieger
THE OLD JOINT STOCK THEATRE
JULY 19-28, 2018
WWW.OLDJOINTSTOCK.CO.UK
COME LOOK AT THE FREAKS

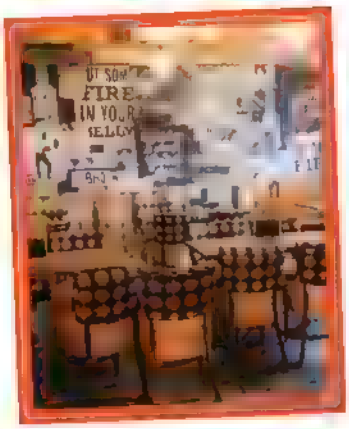
Bar Diva
THURSDAY TO MONDAY
9PM - 3AM
THURSDAY GET POUNDED KARAOKE WITH MISS ANNIE SELECTED DRINKS
FRIDAYS FREAKY FRIDAY
SATURDAY FIERCE SATURDAYS WITH FIERCE FANTASY
SUNDAY SIZZLING SUNDAYS WITH MISS MO BILITY AND
MONDAYS IS GET POUNDED
BAR
DIVA
NEW
LOWER PLAZA MALL KING STREET DY2 8NZ DUDLEY

munch

Food and drink news from across the Midlands...

Acclaimed chef opens new Birmingham city centre restaurant

Smokey Barrels Bar & Grill opens in Birmingham



New restaurant Smokey Barrels Bar & Grill has opened on Birmingham s Coventry Road. The new venue features a menu that's full of smokehouse favourites, including low and slow ribs, pulled pork, ultimate burgers and rib-eye steaks, all prepared on the in house hickory smoker.

Michelin starred chef Brad Carter, from Birmingham's Carters Of Moseley, is holding a masterclass for food lovers at Webbs garden centre in Wychbold, Worcestershire, on Sunday 10 June. Tickets for the event are priced at £22.50. To book your space, go online at webbsdirect.co uk/food

Diverse vegan cuisine on offer in Lichfield

Pub chain Brewhouse & Kitchen, which has a premises in Lichfield, has launched a new summer menu offering 'the UK's most diverse vegan cuisine'.
Claiming that 'this summer, traditional pub grub dies', the venue's new menu includes British farm assured 'beer-can' chicken, West Country crab cakes, beetroot & thyme risotto, Korean breaded tofu and falafel, Sri Lankan vegetable curry and soft shell tacos filled with options of cajun king prawns and panko breaded tofu. The eatery also serves wood aged Belgian craft beer. To book a table at the Lichfield venue, visit brewhouseandkitchen.com

LGBT POLSKA

LGBT Polska is a social meet up group for the Polish LGBT community and their friends in the West Midlands

KWIK PRICK
Kwik Prick is a free rapid HIV test for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities, and is available at Trade every Monday* from 12 noon until 6pm.
Kwik Prick:
TRADE
Drop-in service every Monday*, 12 noon until 6pm
Appointments can be made for other days.
Location: Trade, 2nd Floor,
27 Bowling Green Street, Leicester, LE1 6AS
For more information call us on 0116 254 1747
or visit us at www.tradesexualhealth.com
*Kwik Prick is not available on Public Holidays
Trade Charity Number 1081552

Men's Health Week

Monday 11 - Sunday 17 June 2018 · #MHW2018

Did you know that men are more likely to get diabetes and are more likely to suffer complications and face amputation as a result. It's also a fact that men are more likely to die from the disease.
Diabetes is the focus of this year's Men's Health Week. Here are some key facts about this increasing issue, and ways in which you can prevent the risk...

Key facts about men and diabetes

One in ten men now have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. A tripling in the incidence of diabetes in middle aged men has been predicted for the next 30 years.

The inequalities amongst men and women in regard to diabetes have not yet been fully recognised by health policymakers and practitioners but they point out that more attention needs to be paid in engaging men in diabetes in 3 key stages - prevention, early diagnosis and improving care and delivery of treatment.

It is estimated that 4.5 million people are now living with diabetes in the UK. 3.5 million of these have been diagnosed, and one million are so far undiagnosed.

Males in the most deprived communities, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men are more likely to develop diabetes.

Erectile dysfunction is a common problem for men with diabetes - and we don't really want that, do we?

The principal modifiable cause of Type 2 diabetes is being overweight or obese

Early signs of diabetes?

- **Increased thirst.**
- **Increased hunger**
- **Dry mouth.**
- **Frequent urination or urine infections.**
- **Fatigue (feeling weak & tired)**
- **Blurred vision.**
- **Headaches.**

So what can be done?

Men can reduce their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes primarily by achieving a healthy weight. Despite men being more likely than women to tip the scales, they are less likely to participate in weight management programmes such as Slimming World or Weight Watchers.

Men's Health Forum has established that many men would prefer programmes that adopt a different approach to weight loss other than those primarily aimed at women. One effective approach has been to provide male targeted programmes at professional football clubs.

Clubs such as Aston Villa, Birmingham City and Stoke City all offer active programmes as part of their Community Trust schemes Birmingham LGBT also offer a range of events that could help with weight loss - check them out at blgbt.org

For more information about Men's Health Week and the male diabetes crisis, visit menshealthforum.org.uk/mhw

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LIFE OF A THIRTYSOMETHING GAY

66 Dirty laundry 99

There I was, driving down the M5 one sunny evening on the way to Exeter, and it hit me. It was time to forgive. It had only taken seven years, but like the parting of the waves, suddenly everything was clear and full of possibility. After all this time, I felt an inordinate sense of relief.

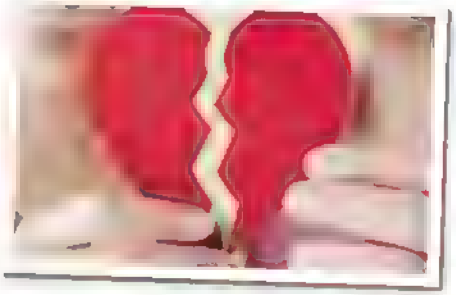
I don't know about you, but there's something in that age-old question about when do you truly forgive your 'ex'? For many, it's a moveable feast. The wounds go deep, the proverbial water has already long passed under the rickety old bridge and the dirty laundry has been aired for all to see. How do you reconcile all of that?

Yet as much as it had ended bitterly - both of us held to ransom by the other's overweening pride and our self assurance in our own arguments and points of view - it hadn't always been so. In fact we'd been positively made for one another; well, in spirit at least. He was the gregarious, social broker, the one who was the centre of any party, the heart and soul of any conversation and a social butterfly adept at fluttering from person to person, group to group, knitting a party together. He had social dexterity, while I had none. I was the bookish one, the reserved, slightly stiff and shy one, full of a social anxiety that consumed me, except when I was among those who were my nearest and dearest. My guard is always up - I don't know why, it just is He was the bold, leap-before-you-think kind of guy, the 'fuck it, what's the worst that can happen?' type of spirit. I'm the 'plan it, let's be sure' kind of person. I know where I want to go and how I'm going to get there because, 'shit, what if we get lost or it doesn't happen?' He was the messy one, disorganised in everything, and could never find the car keys or his bank card. I was the cleaner, the shopper, the bill organiser and the fixer. They say opposites attract, and for us, they mostly did. Together we drew strength from one another, relied on each other. Despite our apparent differences, our attraction was magnetic and unstoppable. We couldn't get enough of each other Together we squared the deal, balanced the team and for years conquered the world without any real hitch.

But in the last two years we were together, things turned down a path neither of us was able to appreciate, or in hindsight, really prevent. Our differences, which until then had been our combining strengths, became our intense intolerances His messiness became my repetitive chores. My preference for a quiet night in, his social decline. As the cracks emerged, so did our other, more acute differences. The arguments became more frequent. Yet peppered in-between were moments of peace, where we held up white flags, tearfully bared our souls and made promises that we would try harder, that we still loved each other, that we still had a future. Of course, we hadn't, but it's the cathartic process we all go through as we break away from those we love, still too afraid to think of life beyond the immediacy of our relationship We had become the Titanic. Doomed to hit a berg that would sink us, taking more than just ourselves down with it.

When the end came, it was a mutual decision. Battle-worn and deeply scarred, we decided to make a break for it. The lure of a new life appealed to me enormously. A fresh start, a time to be on my own and 'just be'. I needed to rediscover myself after five years of compromises, I needed the time to find out who I had become. We parted ways but remained close friends. He inevitably met someone a few months later, once more the social butterfly. We also shared custody of the dog, so we met up often and celebrated each other's new-found lives with politeness

That was until I met someone myself about a year later. I began to drift away from my ex, and as he felt me truly leave his life, he grew angry and churlish. I grew resentful. Our friendship turned sour and where sourness falls, bitterness quickly follows. Heated arguments reignited, old wounds opened up, our dirty laundry was once more put out for all to see. He became vengeful. During our relationship, I had taken out finance on two cars in my own name because he was unable to get a loan. One day I awoke to find the key to his car on my doorstep,



the car parked outside. It was now mine to deal with apparently! He walked away and left me in enormous debt, his car full of negative equity, and I had nowhere to go with it. It took years to repay it. It was a poisonous gesture that ripped out my heart, stamped on my respect for him and crushed me emotionally. I felt deeply betrayed.

I didn't speak to him for seven years after that, despite the random drunken messages he would send me telling me he still loved me, that he was sorry, that 'shit happens sometimes'. He never understood that someone needs to create the shit in the first place. And yet, seven years on, driving down that long motorway, it finally felt right to me to accept that, despite the pain, the anguish, the betrayal, we were both guilty of sorts. We had both said and done things we later regretted. He still loved me and was losing me as I drifted away into my new life. He was hurting, too. The act of vengeance is often a hollow reprise. It has no real long term fulfilment. The fact I had ignored him for seven years was yet one more silent treatment that I'd flung his way to drive my point home.

I was exhausted by it all. I finally acknowledged, as I was driving, that I still love him. I certainly couldn't go back to him, nor him to me, but I love him nonetheless. I guess I'd always known that, from the way I'd behaved. And through that confession, I felt compelled to forgive him. Forgiveness, it seems, is an uneasy thing It's strange that letting go and forgiving can sometimes feel like giving in. Yet when the time comes and the forgiveness is authentic, it's a powerful thing - and I, for one, am so pleased to have finally found it.

CAT'S CORNER

"American psycho"

America is an odd kind of place. Hearing about US political and social news is like watching the most far-fetched Netflix series ever. And that is some accolade.

On the one hand, America is so cool. So very cool. Get this! Jennifer Aniston, the lovely, lovely Jennifer Aniston, is reportedly going to play the first lesbian US president in a Netflix film (I immediately retract the above intimation that Netflix stuff isn't realistic). How utterly marvellous! I cannot wait. And, in this, America is so many streets ahead of the UK, where we think it's great that the odd (dull) gay character pops up living on Coronation Street or down on the 'Dale. The US's Queer Eye and Ru Paul's Drag Race are two of the most popular TV series ever, and they're so gay/trans/queer-positive and loved-up that it's like showering in Love Hearts (in a world where Love Hearts are soft and bouncy). On this side of the water, we get all teary-eyed and over-excited when Elton John is allowed to sing The Lion King.

On the other (gun-toting hand), 11 trans people have been murdered in the US just for being, well, trans. In the last 62 months, there have only been six in which there hasn't been gun violence in a school in the States. In this same period of time, 2,710 children have died from shooting. And yet the country maintains its loose grip on gun control because it is widely believed (so they say) that it's people who kill people, not guns. Yeesss, arm them only with a handful of candy floss, and see how many people kill people then. Utter madness.

And don't get me started on that orange bloke they elected to be president. How is America so heinously full of violent hatred and the guiding light in terms of cool attitudes towards gay people all at the same time? It makes your head spin. On pretty much any topic, it's impossible to predict whether the US is going to lead the way in the world in terms of tolerance and love, or just mow everyone down with a machine gun, no questions asked.

It has to be said that I have never been to America (largely because of that machine gun thing above) but, should our Jen ever really become president, I will be there in a flash.

ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

Changing times

Like two billion others, I was glued to the telly (well, a large screen in Eden Bar in Birmingham, to be precise) as Harry and Meghan tied the knot. I'm not a great fan of inherited privilege, so I was cheering as much for the change that this remarkable ceremony presented as for the happy couple. A gospel choir, an American preacher who has championed LGBT rights and a diverse and colourful guest list wobbled the stiff upper lip of the monarchy's old guard.

The following evening, I watched another bit of great British telly - Hugh Grant starring as former Liberal Party leader Jeremy Thorpe in the BBC docu-drama, A Very English Scandal.

I well remember the events depicted in the series, as whenever it was reported on the news, my parents fell into an awkward silence. In mid-'70s Britain, homosexuality and politicians were not discussed in polite conversation.

Jeremy Thorpe, the rising star of British politics, was brought down by a scandal which arose from allegations by stable-hand and model Norman Scott, that he and Thorpe had had a gay relationship in the early 1960s.

Thorpe denied the affair and was able to ensure that rumours went unreported for more than a decade. But Scott shared his story with the police and journalists, and by the mid-1970s was perceived as a danger both to Thorpe and the Liberal Party. The problem deepened following the shooting of Scott's dog during an alleged murder attempt by a hired gunman, an incident which brought the matter into the open. Thorpe was forced to resign the Liberal leadership in May 1976, and was charged with conspiracy to murder Scott.

Thorpe was tried and acquitted at the Old Bailey, but partly because of his refusal to testify in court, his reputation was left in tatters.

These two TV highlights - A Very English Scandal and the royal wedding - illustrate the extent to which Britain has changed. Gone are the days when politicians and others in public life felt the need to conceal their sexuality in the way that Jeremy Thorpe did. And many of us celebrated the day a prince married the divorced daughter of a black American social worker, smashing the royal mould forever. We will have to wait a long time for another high-profile royal wedding, but at this rate it could be a same-sex one. We can all dream!

THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

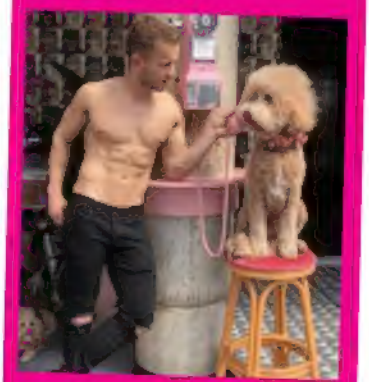
CHECK OUT THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BIGGEST BRUM PRIDE PARADE!

Birmingham Pride 2018 has been and gone - but you can relive (or live as the case may be) the whole experience again with the official highlights video from this year's Carnival Parade. It was undoubtedly the biggest and best yet!

Snaking through the city centre, over 130 floats took part to make it a spectacle to behold!

Check out the incredible video at: **facebook.com/PrideBirmingham**

Hot Dudes with Dogs tease new calendar!



One of our favourite EVER Instagram accounts, @HotDudesWithDogs, are working on a calendar featuring the hottest guys and the cutest dogs - two of our favourite things! They're also working on a coffee table picture book. Sadly it'll be quite a wait for the calendar as it's not due until 2020. However we do know that portion of the proceeds from sales of the calendar have already been earmarked to go to non-profit organisations that rescue dogs.

CELEB SNAPS!

Our fave celebrity Instagram pics...

MNEK loved his time at Pride: "Happy Pride, Birmingham!"

Austin Armacost (left): "Sums up how amazing Birmingham Pride was this year!"

Jake Shears: "Thank you Birmingham, that was absolutely magical."

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